

Double Your Pleasure and Double your Fun with TWO Islands in One Trip! Honeymoon and Caladesi Islands Monday, Feb 20, 8:30am to 8:00pm

Please join us for an exciting beach excursion to Honeymoon Island and Caladesi State Park Islands. The two islands are among a chain of pristine barrier islands with soft white sugar sand beaches and palms that sparkle in the sun like a string of luxurious pearls. Caladesi Island is one of the few untouched islands along the Gulf Coast. It is only accessible by boat.

Since it will still be a bit chilly for swimming (average water temperature is 63-70 degrees), we chose this location because of the number of other beach and water activities you can enjoy. Honeymoon Beach has plentiful shelling along its shores, enough that you might want to bring water shoes with you. There are also hiking trails on Honeymoon Island that are not terribly long or taxing. They range from the ¼ mile Nature Center Loop to the 2.5 hour, 5 mile North Beach Trek. Information about these trails is included in the attached brochure. (insert Rotary Center Trail Center PDF here) There is also fishing near the Dunedin Causeway.

Caladesi though, offers a glimpse into the Florida of old, back when both islands were one stretch of land called "Hog Island". We've shared a bit of that history below, but believe you will want to experience it in person.

Caladesi Island is one of America's top beaches. The beaches are pristine. Kayaking is available so that you can enjoy the inland mangrove tunnels or you can kayak from Honeymoon to Caladesi. In addition, Caladesi boasts fascinating nature island trails -- the Beach Loop or the Hammock Loop. Another **point of interest: Scharrer Homestead:** Myrtle Scharrer-Betz was the only child born on the island. To walk from the park to her home is 1.3 miles via Dunedin Pass. The walk takes about 25 minutes. Fantastic history, but NOT easily accessible.

One caution about Caladesi: There is a full-service concession stand. (hot food, cold food plus beer and wine, to name a few items). BUT, the concession closes when they run out of food (since they only stock one day's worth of provisions), so it is recommended to **NOT** venture over to the island after 2 pm if you are hungry. No alcohol is allowed on the ferry. Caladesi Island goers should remember to time their ferry return to meet the bus schedule.

Both islands offer a concession stand and cafe, along with umbrella & chair rentals. The difficult part is deciding which island suits you best!

We have negotiated a discounted fee for our members that want to experience Caladesi on this trip. The round trip fare will be \$16, payable with your reservation so we can reserve a ferry spot for you. The 20-minute ferry ride leaves Honeymoon Island every hour, starting at 10 am. For safety purposes, beach wagons and carts ARE NOT ALLOWED on the ferry. The ferry returns to Honeymoon Island on the half-hour mark.

Sometime during our stay on these islands, you will want to stop at the **Rotary Centennial Nature Center on Honeymoon Island.** The RCNC is fully staffed with

volunteers to guide us through the center and give helpful information about the island. The center has informative, educational movies to view, local artists' exhibits, a shell collection, a gift shop, a nature trail, a back porch with rocking chairs to sit and view the St. Joseph Sound. This walk is approximately 7 minutes from the main beach.

No matter which island you choose, you may want to rent beach gear once you arrive, rather than carting it with you. PLEASE NOTE: There are no lifeguards on either island.

Beach Chair/Umbrella Rentals: Rent chairs and/or umbrellas at any of the cafes—The South Beach Pavillion, Cafe Honeymoon or Cafe Caladesi. Rates are \$30 for umbrella w/2 chairs; \$15 for a single chair; \$20 for umbrella only. <https://romantichoneymoonisland.com/>

Hiking: Osprey Trailhead is the beginning of a trail network covering the northern end of Honeymoon Island. The Osprey Trailhead is absolutely beautiful! Take a hike to see armadillos, bald eagles, tortoises, birds, frogs, lizards, crabs. The trail is easy to walk, partially shaded, and full of critters, including mosquitoes (bring bug spray). The trails have benches placed periodically to provide opportunities to rest and/or contemplate. There is a private beach at the end of the trail. It is an approximately 25 minute walk from the main beach area to get to the Trailhead. Alternatively, it takes about 5 minutes to get to the trailhead by bike, although bikes are not recommended on the trail. www.floridahikes.com/honeymoonisland

Kayaking: Sail Honeymoon Inc. rents kayaks for those interested in kayaking to Caladesi Island. Fees for single-person kayaks are \$35/2 hours; for a 2-person kayak, \$45/2 hours. <https://www.sailhoneymoon.com/>

Bicycling: Wheel Fun Rentals, located on Honeymoon Island, offers pedal-powered fun for all of our beachcombers. They offer multi-passenger Surreys and beach cruisers. Take a bike ride to Osprey Trailhead. Trails are paved throughout the island. Helmets are recommended. It is a 5 minute walk from the main beach area to get to bike rentals. Cost is \$12/hour or \$26/half day. www.wheelfunrentals.com

Fishing: The Dunedin Causeway has the best fishing. It is a 2 ½ mile long series of three bridges. The bridges offer small fishing areas on both sides of the road, plus park benches for anyone who desires to sightsee. Fish that are being caught include: snook, trout, redfish, and pompano. The causeway has a hard surface for bikers, walkers, sunbathers, and sightseers and a public restroom along with kayak rental. **The High and Dry Grill: 61 Causeway Blvd.** with outdoor seating, food and cold beer. The Grill is the only place drinking is allowed on the causeway. PLEASE NOTE: If you choose to fish at the Dunedin Causeway, you'll have to walk back to the beach, or spend the day on the Causeway.

Or.....Fishing from your kayak: Kayakers can launch directly from the Honeymoon Causeway beach.

Or....Fishing at Hurricane Pass, which offers surf and pass fishing. You may catch flounder, snook, trout, redfish, snapper, whiting, sheepshead, pompano, Spanish

Mackerel, cobia, ladyfish and tarpon. All fishing must conform to regulations. A license is required as are steady feet because the area is known for rough currents.

A LITTLE HISTORY LESSON - How it all began

Henry Scharrer, a native of Switzerland, ventured to America by sailing to the island in the early 1890's. He stayed for forty-four years. Henry married Catherine McNally in 1894 and had a daughter, they named Myrtle, after the wax myrtle trees that surrounded their remote home.

Henry had settled on Hog Island, (which was the name of Caladesi and Honeymoon Island) and declared that he had found his dream home. He obtained citizenship, improved the land, carved a channel, and planted crops.

Myrtle was a tomboy and, in addition to her many domestic tasks, she assisted her father with fishing, the livestock and crops. Most of Myrtle's life, she attended school on the island. Myrtle married Herman Betz in 1915 and moved away. Myrtle soon realized how much she missed the island. She returned and witnessed the Hurricane of 1921. That hurricane carved Hog Island into Caladesi Island (on the south) and Honeymoon Island (on the north), where the sand is as soft as powder and the water glows turquoise when the sun shines.

Early Pinellas histories emerged from the writings of those who were present for the dramatic change of the peninsula. Myrtle's writings focus was on the environmental aspects of coastal living in the days before tourism. She was diligent in efforts to track and band birds on the island between 1918-1935. Prior to her passing in January 1992, Betz became an advocate for preserving Caladesi and undeveloped areas of Honeymoon Island. Myrtle's never-ending desire for defending her birthplace and its history preserved a landscape worthy of honor.

Scharrer- Betz, Myrtle, 2007 enlarged edition: "Yesteryear I Lived in Paradise: The Story of Caladesi Island."

Although the remains of the home is not easily accessible, the link below will take you to a few fascinating facts about Myrtle Betz's home. <https://caladesimemories.com/about-yesteryear-i-lived-in-paradise/>

Given that there are so many activities available to us on these islands, we will spend the bulk of our day there, leaving for dinner in Dunedin later in the afternoon. Because our travel date is a Federal holiday (again!), your reservation form will ask you to make your likely choices for island, activities and restaurants so that we can give everyone an approximate count and not run into any shortages. Details on restaurant options on both islands for lunch and Dunedin for dinner are listed below. We've also listed some shopping and museum suggestions in Dunedin for you.

We will leave Hope Lutheran Church at 8:30am, arriving HMI at 10:30am. We'll depart for Dunedin @ 3:30pm, then head back home @ 6pm.

LUNCH OPTIONS ON HMI OR CALADESI:

South Beach Pavilion Cafe, (on HMI) www.romantichoneymoonisland.com

Cafe Honeymoon, (on HMI) www.romantichoneymoonisland.com

Cafe Caladesi, (on Caladesi Island) www.romantichoneymoonisland.com

DINNER OPTIONS ON DUNEDIN

Crown & Bull 319 Main St; All day eatery/ martini bar, live music and a broad menu of small and large plates; crownandbull.com

Cafe Alfresco 344 Main St. open until 9pm on Monday Feb 20; 4.5 stars 2,000 reviews; Huge menu ranging from Italian to burgers. American Restaurant 4.5 stars with 2800 reviews; cafealfresco.com

Clear Sky Draught House. Relaxed environment with craft beer options with pub grub. <https://clearskydraughthaus.com/>

HopScotch Cafe.: 1006 Broadway, 727-223-5227 Wine, beer with creative sandwiches in an easygoing haunt with vintage accents and a terrace. hopscotchcafedunedin.com

Lucky Lobster. 941 Huntley Ave 727-228-1222, Casual seafood dishes & raw bar offered in contemporary surrounds with a sleek bar and covered patio. Menu: .luckylobsterco.com

Shopping after dinner in Dunedin.

The Spoiled Rotten Gift Shop: 200 Main St.. 727-223-8832.
spoiledrottendun.com

My Favorite Things: 330 Main. 727-738-1277.

The Great Giftsby: 200 Main St. #105 727-754-1719.thegreatgiftsby.com.

Celtic Shop of Dunedin: 354 Main St. 727-733-2200.celticshopdunedin.com

Our House: 475 Main St. 727-614-8198

.Attractions: Penny Lane, Beatles Museum: 730 Broadway 2nd Floor, Stirling Commons.pennylanebeatlesmuseum.com A must see!!